



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

4 MAY 1987

DAEN-PEC-P

SUBJECT: Classification Guidance for Park Ranger Positions
in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers


SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Enclosed is the final guidance concerning the application of the GS-025 Park Ranger position classification standard. It should be used in conjunction with previous guidance we provided you on 14 May 1986 concerning the classification of COE Park Managers.

2. We do not anticipate any adverse impact during the application of the revised standard. Should there be any questions, please address them to Dan Carpenter, commercial number 202-272-0556.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encl


R. LOSCHIALPO
Director of Personnel

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This guidance supplements the recently revised Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Position Classification Standard for the GS-025 Park Ranger Series. In a broad sense, the revised GS-025 standard is adequate for use in classifying Corps Ranger jobs. However, because the standard does not sufficiently address Corps specific field skills, the following information is furnished.

BACKGROUND

The primary objective of all Corps of Engineers Natural Resources activities is the management of natural resources to assure continued optimum use and public enjoyment while assuring that environmental qualities, ecological relationships and esthetic values are in proper balance.

The maintenance of a delicate balance between the recreational needs of the public and the ecological integrity of natural resources requires a progressive and active policy. The implementation of that policy is the direct responsibility of the Corps Ranger. The Ranger is the Corps' "face to the nation."

Tasked with such a bold and nationally sensitive mission, it is imperative that the Corps Ranger be among the best qualified, best trained, and most highly motivated personnel available.

This guidance provides assistance in classifying and evaluating Ranger positions and, more importantly, will provide a means through classification for the establishment of a career ladder for Rangers with clearly defined entry, intermediate and full performance grade levels.

1. The OPM standard describes Ranger work in three broad functional areas: interpretation, visitor protection and services, and resources management. However, for the purpose of this guidance, Corps Ranger work is divided into four functional areas: recreation management, visitor assistance and services, natural resources management and interpretation. Outlined below are the four functional areas with more specific programs sub-listed. The functional areas and programs are not all-inclusive, but are intended to enhance understanding of the Corps Ranger's job by listing the many areas with which Rangers must work.

a. Recreation Management.

- Operation and Maintenance of Recreation Areas
- Recreation User Fee Program
- Outgrants Management/Inspection and Enforcement
- Project Facility Inventories and Inspections
- Visitation Monitoring/Use Trend Reviews
- Data Collection and Analysis
- Project Signs and Navigation Aids
- Contracts Management and Oversight
- Preparation and Review of Plans and Specifications
- Budget Preparation and Reviews
- Interagency Coordination

b. Visitor Assistance and Services.

- Patrol of Project Land and Water Areas
- Interpretation and Enforcement of Rules and Regulations Governing Civil Works Water Resource Development Projects
- Public Safety and Safety Reviews
- Search and Rescue Operations
- Management of the Accident, Emergency and Fire Fighting/Prevention Activities
- Project Physical Security
- Incident Reporting
- Law Enforcement Agreements

c. Natural Resources Management.

- Lakeshore Management and Regulatory Permits
- Forest Management
- Wildlife Management
- Fisheries Management
- Water Quality/Pollution Control
- Aquatic Plant Control
- Cultural, Historical and Archeological Programs
- Boundary Line Maintenance and Encroachment Prevention
- Flood Control, Dam Operations and Safety
- Endangered Species Management
- Pest Control
- Range Management
- Erosion Control and Siltation
- Real Estate
- Specified Acts Permits
- Mineral Rights Leasing Activities
- Coordination of Water Releases for Agricultural and Other Purposes

- Interpretive Presentations to School and Civic Groups
- Special Events (project clean-ups, jamborees, handicapped programs)
- Public and Employee Safety Awareness Programs
- Visitor Center Operations
- Visitor Information Brochures, Publications and News Releases
- Volunteer Services
- Trails Program

2. The revised Park Ranger standard combines the Park Ranger Series, GS-025, and the Park Technician Series, GS-026. Included in this guidance are descriptions of work at the following levels:

Park Ranger	GS-025-05
Park Ranger (Mgt. Trainee)	GS-025-05
Park Ranger (Mgt. Trainee)	GS-025-07
Park Ranger	GS-025-09

a. Park Ranger GS-025-05

Level of Responsibility

Work is performed within well-established programs, but may require that the Ranger initiate, develop and modify work methods. Rangers at this level follow established procedures and precedents, but are often required to select and adapt procedures to meet different conditions. Specific work assignments are made by either higher grade Rangers or Park Managers. The supervisor provides assistance in resolving problems that have unusual or unfamiliar conditions, methods, or concepts. Work is reviewed for adequacy of presentation or handling of visitor problems, logic in the application/selection of appropriate techniques, and conformity with policy.

Nature of Assignment

The full performance GS-05 Ranger performs specific assignments that require a general knowledge of Resource Management programs such as recreation management, visitor assistance, forestry, fisheries and wildlife management, lakeshore management and interpretation. The following examples are illustrative:

(1) Participates in the day-to-day operation of recreation areas by checking the areas for compliance with rules and regulations pertaining to parking, camping, noise level, sanitation and safety. Brings problems or violations to the attention of visitors and, if appropriate, issues notices of violations. Observes visitor use patterns and their effect on the resources. Performs visitor surveys and tabulates data. Monitors and repairs visitation recording equipment. Collects user fees, maintains records of and accounts for funds; submits deposits.

(2) Participates in patrols of project lands and water to ensure compliance with Federal regulations. Notes violations and takes appropriate action; e.g., issues warnings and violation notices, or reports non-compliance to higher grade personnel.

(3) Participates in the inspection of a variety of service contracts including grounds maintenance (mowing, pruning), refuse removal, janitorial, law enforcement, etc. Prepares inspection reports and notes deficiencies. Informs supervisor of unusual problems. Inspects government property for unsafe conditions, unserviced equipment and facilities.

(4) Participates in the administration of the lakeshore management program. Inspects facilities and activities to ensure compliance with terms and conditions of permit and/or license.

(5) Participates in natural resources management activities such as gathering data to be used in the development and updating of Operational Management Plans and/or Master Plans. Participates in activities such as fish and wildlife surveys, forest inventories, type mapping, firefighting (prevention, suppression, controlled burning). Participates in activities associated with real estate matters; e.g., leases, licenses, permits and easements. Conducts non-complex compliance and utilization inspections, encroachment inspections, boundary line inspections, maintenance, and review of specific phases of more complex inspections.

(6) Develops interpretive programs, conducts research of topics using sources such as records, books, files; and, interviews people who have personal knowledge of a particular site or event when appropriate. Selects and organizes material to fit the purpose of a program and the type of group for which it is intended. Provides visitors with information concerning points of interest, travel routes, historical and natural features, and park activities.

b. Park Ranger (Management Trainee) GS-025-05

Level of Responsibility

Work is performed in a variety of well-established programs under the guidance of a higher grade Ranger or Park Manager as the first phase of a formal training program. Work is assigned in terms of ultimate objectives of assignments with general instructions provided for special assignments. Ranger works on own initiative in selecting and applying methods, techniques, and procedures. The supervisor provides assistance in resolving problems that have unusual or unfamiliar conditions, methods, or concepts. Work is reviewed for adequacy of presentation or handling of visitor problems, logic in the application/selection of appropriate techniques, and conformity with policy. Review of work is intense for developmental assignments.

Nature of Assignment

As a trainee, performs duties that require a general knowledge of natural resource management programs and that are designed to orient the Ranger in the mission and work of a natural resource management project. Receives formal and on-the-job training in the functions and operations of the organization, agency policies, and regulations. Typical entry level assignments may involve but are not limited to:

Assists a senior Ranger in the implementation of Recreation Management Plans involving tasks characteristic of the outdoor recreation planning, safety management, and recreation specialist occupations. Performs tasks such as patrolling project land and water areas to observe and check that visitor activities comply with regulations and to provide visitor assistance. Checks on the condition of public use areas, commercial docks, group-use areas, etc.; documents the conditions and activities noted on patrols and makes reports to senior Ranger along with recommendations concerning routine problems; within assigned authority, exercises citation authority, issues citations to lake visitors as necessary. Participates in project-wide visitation and utilization surveys by accomplishing tasks such as collecting and preparing visitation survey data, taking aerial and land photographs of visitor activities; installing, reading and making repairs to traffic counters, etc.; advising visitors of safety requirements and practices; rendering first-aid as necessary; assisting in the recovery of drowned persons; promoting cleanup campaigns and youth programs; making presentations to various organizations and groups concerning project recreation features and progress, etc.

(2) Participates in the implementation of the forestry program. Performs various timber management activities, such as timber cruises and sample surveys to locate and estimate the quantity of timber on a given area; selecting and marking timber for cutting or sale; estimating merchantable volume using prescribed volume tables and techniques; and, performing various duties to eradicate various insects and diseases.

(3) Participates in the short-range planning and execution of all activities related to the fisheries and wildlife management program. Gathers data on the fish and wildlife populations, conditions of habitat, tabulates statistics, etc. Implements various work plans to manage a particular wildlife species. Participates in the assessment of fish and wildlife management techniques. Performs tasks such as selecting sites for food plots, identifying the need for and implementing controlled burning for wildlife food improvement, identifying and collecting data concerning vegetation to be used for establishing vegetative plans, selecting areas for wildlife brush shelters, selecting areas and sites for woodduck boxes, identifying suitable waterfowl habitat areas and sites, locating beaver ponds and developing limited plans for beaver pond manipulation for waterfowl habitat.

(4) Assists a senior Ranger in the implementation of plans for Interpretive Programs involving tasks characteristic of the natural, historical, cultural and archeological occupations. Conducts individual and group interpretive tours of the lock, dam, or lake area. Conducts routine campfire programs, writes routine newspaper articles. Conducts background research and gathers data for developing interpretative programs.

Level of Responsibility

Work is performed in a substantial variety of programs under the guidance of a higher grade Ranger or Park Manager. As an advanced trainee, the Ranger is responsible for the day-to-day planning and execution of parts of some program areas. Works on own initiative in selecting and applying methods, techniques, and procedures. Work assignments are made in terms of ultimate objectives of assignments and are designed to provide training and experience for higher level work. There is a structured training plan devised to provide the Ranger a broad base of Ranger work experience.

Nature of Assignment

This is an advanced trainee position that requires a thorough, specific knowledge of agency policies, objectives, and operating methods related to the functional areas of assignment, and a good general knowledge of agency policies, objectives, and operating methods as they relate to the total project activities. Assignments involve working close with project and district staff personnel who are responsible for management planning and/or direction of substantive program efforts such as lakeshore management, visitor assistance, accident prevention/safety, recreation, resource management/land management, interpretation, etc. The Ranger performs work in one or more of these areas for approximately 50% of the time over the course of a normal workyear. Typical assignments may include but are not limited to the following:

(1) Participates in recreation program planning and administration with responsibility for developing and/or providing significant and substantive input and hands-on participation in the development and execution of recreation area operating plans. Plans and reports are pertinent to the physical make-up, use, improvement and maintenance of area(s) having a variety of uses such as general day-use and overnight camping, swimming, hiking, shelter houses, visitor centers, etc., frequently with electric and water utility availability on-site. As an integral part of patrol duties and for overall planning, administration, or operational efforts, makes observations relative to visitor use of established areas and inclination to use undeveloped areas for specific and varied activities. As appropriate, records information relative to usage and site characteristics and recommends types or locations of facilities, changes to established facilities or usage guidelines, etc. On a regular and recurring basis, identifies needed facility maintenance and actual or potentially dangerous, unsafe or unhealthy activities or conditions. Takes steps to make conditions known, rectified, and entered into on-going program planning. Provides visitor information regarding recreation activities, fire, safety, sanitation, or other regulations, and, as appropriate, participates in identification of need for materials, supplies, and manpower to police and maintain areas.

7) Patrols park land and water areas to enforce various rules and regulations through issuance or verbal warnings, written warnings, and actual citations. Complies with District policies and guidelines issued by the Federal Court having local jurisdiction and maintains necessary evidence and offense records. Makes recommendations for changes in visitor assistance programs based on observations of visitor use patterns and time/day situations which are likely problem periods or sources. Investigates and reports all trespasses and/or encroachment and damages to Government property and reports extent of damages. Investigates and reports accidents which occur on Government property involving vehicles, people, or property and gathers information for use by the Government in conjunction with such accidents. Participates in rescue or other emergency operations work involving searching for missing persons, boating or fishing accidents, disorders, fire, flooding situations, etc.

(3) Participates in resource management program planning and administration for which others have project level program responsibility. Develops and/or provides significant and substantive input and hands-on participation into the development and execution of resource management and protection program plans and reporting, typically pertinent to lakeshore management, accident/safety, land management, forestry, wildlife, agricultural lease, or similar program areas. Performs and/or assists in the accomplishment of field office aspects of planning, and administration, and execution. Develops assigned portions or segments of management plans in prescribed format utilizing data collected, field observation, information obtained from district office sources, etc., and prepares narrative input, maps, charts, or other required exhibits, records, lists, etc.

(4) Accomplishes on-site surveillance over contractor services in progress or upon completion to ascertain extent of quality and quantity of performance relative to contract provisions. Activities normally involve items such as facility maintenance from a cleaning and sanitizing standpoint, garbage collection, mowing, weed spraying, or other related maintenance operations. Corrects minor problems as possible in direct contact with contractor's on-site representative, and reports other problems to supervisor or other designated person.

(5) Participates in project interpretive program efforts through preparation of interpretive material in specified subjects of an historical, natural resource, or other project-related nature and through substantive involvement in overall site interpretive program administration. Develops interpretive material through research, interview, etc., and develops into useable format and length, and obtains or develops supporting material such as slides, charts, drawings, basic exhibits, etc. As assigned, gives interpretive information talks to groups and organizations such as campers, school classes, civic groups, and clubs. Based on observations, experiences, or requests made during presentations or while performing other duties; suggests new topics, revisions, or other changes and improvements inclusive of those impacting on program content, methods of presentation, scheduling, needed exhibits, etc.

Level of Responsibility

Park Rangers may be assigned a variety of program management responsibilities such as overseeing the development and execution of programs, including coordination of the work of other Rangers. Initial assignments are made by indicating the purpose and general direction of the program or project and any deadlines or similar constraints. The Ranger works with guidelines that are generally applicable but not specific to on-site conditions or problems. Independently performs assignments requiring initiative and resourcefulness to carry out day-to-day planning and operations.

Nature of Assignment:

Park Rangers are responsible for planning and executing one or more programs in recreation management, visitor assistance and services, natural resources management and interpretation. A thorough, specific knowledge of agency policies, objectives, and operating methods related to the functional areas of assignment is required. In addition, a good general knowledge of agency policies, objectives, and operating methods as they relate to total project activities is required to implement new or changing programs. Rangers may also be assigned full program responsibility for a specific area of the project and may, in addition, serve as a subject matter expert in a functional area.

(1) Recreation-Management: Is responsible for the development and execution of the Recreation Management program at a lake project. Develops plans for operations including budgeting and seasonal staffing requirements for such areas as recreation resource management, recreation user fee program project signs and navigation aids, and accident prevention. Develops the recreation management portion of the Operational Management Plan. Develops training programs for lake employees and prepares new or revised guidelines and operating procedures for these areas. Provides technical supervision over lower grade employees, assigning them to certain tasks, giving instructions, and assisting with problems they encounter and suggesting ways to resolve them.

Prepares and updates compliance inspection handbook for all outgrants, including standards for concessionaires' facilities and their public safety plan. Ensures annual compliance inspections are completed and that required corrective actions are taken.

Prepares detailed service contracts (or substantive revisions thereto) as required for various aspects of park/project operations including government cost estimates for work to be performed. Utilizes knowledge of park operations, methods, and practices to estimate approximate costs. Prepares purchase order contracts for a wide range of services, equipment, or material. Writes detailed specifications, prepares lists of potential bidders, and provides cost estimates. Coordinates effort with appropriate District elements during progress and upon completion and reviews finished package to assure that it is appropriate to needs. Assigns inspection of contractor performance in the form of services rendered or product delivered to lower grade rangers. Recommends payment or nonpayment to Park Manager based on findings. Provides documented support for recommendations as appropriate.

Uses this information to evaluate program effectiveness and proposes plans for improvements of park facilities such as overflow campgrounds, amphitheaters, new camp pads, group fire circles, nature trails, etc.

(2) Visitor Assistance: Executes visitor assistance and services programs through instructions to lower grade rangers of rules and regulations (Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations) and handling and reporting incidents in the citation program plans project surveillance through patrols of project lands and waters to prevent unauthorized use, trespass, destruction of property, and to insure compliance with rules and regulations and protection of project land, water and other environmental resources. Assures visitor safety and protection by maintaining facilities are free from hazards and providing surveillance. Assures security of government-owned structures as appropriate. Coordinates visitation use counts and visitor surveys. Performs rescue work, including searching for missing and lost persons, rescue work resulting from boating or fishing accidents, and rendering first aid to the injured. Coordinates law enforcement agreements with sheriff's department, highway patrol, and other law enforcement agencies. Prepares specifications and oversees inspection of contract law enforcement. Prepares in final form mishap and incident reports.

(3) Natural Resource Management: Plans for long-range environmental concerns of the lake and surrounding land area. Prepares, updates and oversees implementation of the Cultural/Historical Resource Plan, project fish and wildlife management plan (Part II of the Operational Management Plan), timber management plan, fire plan, pest control program, etc., to include operations, resource management and seasonal staffing priorities. Provides technical supervision over lower grade employees, assigning them to certain tasks, giving instructions, assisting with problems they encounter and suggesting ways to resolve them, and providing training.

Plans, administers, and monitors all wildlife programs, studies, and experimental work and coordinates management policies with appropriate state and/or federal wildlife agencies. Maintains accurate records of fish and wildlife work on project, including population studies, raw data and maps. Is alert for all possible sources of pollution, erosion, and encroachment, coordinates with other agencies on day-to-day problems, and refers major problems to higher authority.

Plans and recommends multiple use wildlife habitat maintenance and development of new habitats. Prepares timber management plans based on land use designations in Master Plans and data compiled by others from the resource inventory. Works with others to prepare timber sales and appraisals of small timber sales program for small habitat management. Provides quality control inspection of employees and contractors involved in activities related to habitat development projects and other project activities which are contracted.

Oversees agricultural leases and the preparation of maps. Checks acreage, and recommends crop rotation, lease conditions, and length of leases to manager. Provides information on the location, elevation, and boundaries of tracts to lease terms, acreage, crops planted, and conservation practices being used. Resolves noncompliance where possible and makes recommendations for corrective actions where necessary. Maintains agricultural leasing program records.

Serves as an encroachment officer. Ensures boundary line is properly inspected and marked. Major encroachments are referred to Park Manager for resolution.

Administers and monitors the Lakeshore Management Program. Oversees the application/processing and issuance of permits for boat docks and other lakeshore facilities.

(4) Interpretation: Responsible for the development and management of a comprehensive Interpretive Program at a lake project, including both on and off-site programs. Develops plans for operations including resource management and seasonal staffing priorities for such areas as the visitor center operations, trail construction and maintenance, audio-visual program, brochures, special events and visitor safety. Develops training programs and prepares new or revised guidelines and operating procedures for these areas. Assists in the supervision of lower grade permanent or temporary employees by providing job orientation, daily work assignments, on-site guidance and discipline, as needed, and reviews work performed to assure that applicable instructions have been followed and results obtained.

Develops the interpretive portion of the Operational Management Plan. Provides programs within developed and public use areas including live evening programs, exhibits, self-guiding trails, and roving duties. Promotes support for conservation principles and practices and for the park programs and facilities by organizing presentations on safety, ecology, and environmental issues. Works directly with area news media and schools in providing them technical assistance and advice in matters dealing with natural history and interpretation. Makes periodic inspection of nature trails, wayside exhibits, signs, interpretive and audio-visual installations to determine quality of operations and services. Uses this information to evaluate program effectiveness and develop program improvements.